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State *of the* City

..... College Station, Texas in 2012

Welcome

2

Honorable Mayor, City Council and College Station residents:

As the City of College Station prepares to celebrate its **75th anniversary**, I feel enormous pride when I look back at the many successes of our 74th year.

Some of those successes are difficult to miss, such as the pedestrian mall and other improvements in the Northgate District and our new **Fire Station 6**. Other achievements, however, are less obvious. For example, city operations became more efficient, but with greater focus on public safety. Our electric utility is healthier and our tax rate is at a 12-year low. New infrastructure is in place to accommodate growth, while older infrastructure is being maintained for longer service.

The successes from 2012 reflected in this State of the City report are by no means exhaustive, but they do represent the work of a skilled and dedicated workforce that's guided by the direction from this city council. As this is very likely the last annual report of my career, I take great pride in knowing that the accomplishments described in it were achieved by the most professional, courteous, and **dedicated staff** that I have had the honor of working with.

Respectfully,



David Neeley
City Manager



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Municipal Excellence	3-4
Success Stories	5-6
Financially Strong	7
In the Spotlight	8-9
Building for the Future	10-11

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nancy Berry, Mayor
Blanche Brick, Place 1
Jess Fields, Place 2
Karl Mooney, Place 3
John Nichols, Place 4 *
Julie Schultz, Place 5
James Benham, Place 6 **

* *Katy-Marie Lyles (2009-2012)*

** *Dave Ruesink (2009-2012)*

MANAGERS

David Neeley, City Manager
Frank Simpson, Deputy City Manager
Kathy Merrill, Deputy City Manager



Municipal Excellence



National Agency Accreditation

Public Works, Water Services ***NEW***
Police Department, Police Communications
Parks & Recreation

Municipal Excellence

4

CSU recognized for safety and reliability

College Station Utilities (CSU) received the American Public Power Association's Electric Utility Safety Award for safe operating practices. CSU was also one of only 82 public power utilities in the nation to earn the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) award from the APPA.

Public Works receives two Solid Waste Association of North America awards

Sanitation crews were awarded the SWANA Collection Systems Silver Award for their work in developing a centralized location for commercial garbage disposal in the Northgate Entertainment District to improve efficiency and the aesthetics in the district. The division was also recognized for its Public Education and Community Outreach Program.

IT receives Excellence Award

The Municipal Code Corporation awarded the city's new Police Department Memo Automation system with its Excellence Award, one of only three awarded in the nation. This project was spearheaded by Information Technology and has improved the routing of internal Police Department communications and tracking while decreasing staff administrative time.



Best in Blogging

Public Communications awards

College Station has emerged as one of America's best examples of municipal blogging. Ours is used to reach the public and the media with deeper, first-person narratives that tackle a wide range of issues. The Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers (TAMIO) recognized that best practice with social media, as well as Public Communications' interactive Year-In-Review publication. TAMIO's 2013 annual conference will take place in College Station.

WHAT ARE CITIZENS SAYING?

Success Stories

5

Brush collection

Due to the extended drought in 2011, the Public Works Sanitation Division collected 90 percent more brush. Our crews collected 5,217 tons of dead trees, brush and other dead plant material which shattered all previous records.

Wastewater, water reclamation

Already the Brazos Valley's leader in water conservation, 2012 saw College Station open its first reclaimed water system at Veterans Park & Athletic Complex. This virtually drought-proof water supply brings treated wastewater, known as reclaimed or recycled water, from the Carters Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant to irrigate this regional facility. The high-quality recycled water will save about 25 million gallons of drinking water each year.

Barron Rd. widening & Victoria Ave. extension

Before College Station ISD could open its newest high school, proper access to the large campus had to be completed, and that's where the city stepped in. Led by Public Works, the widening of Barron Road and the extension of Victoria Avenue were delivered in time to accommodate an enormous increase in traffic, while ensuring the safety of drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Road improvements

Our Street Maintenance Division was handed a mighty challenge in 2012: Develop a new five-year plan that preserves the quality of our existing roads, yet reduces the amount of resources needed for reconstructing streets. The solution was to create a new pavement rating system and new categories to allow that kind of prioritization.



Success Stories

6

Improved Communications

This year, as part of the Brazos Valley Wide Area Communications System and with assistance from the city's IT Department, a three-year program to replace obsolete communications equipment was completed. This upgrade ensures the reliability for critical, time-sensitive communications to police and fire first responders.

Parks & Recreation Festival Grounds

Wolf Pen Creek Park consistently hosts a variety of festivals and other events, but has been somewhat limited by the great amount of undeveloped space. A new festival site now is able to offer improved electric and water services, a walking trail and more parking. That means bigger events, more visitors to College Station and a better overall experience for our park users.

Parks Facilities Upgrades

Notice anything different about our parks facilities? It might be due to \$2.5 million being allocated for a variety of major improvements, including: athletic fields at Veterans and Central parks; a new concessions facility at Central Park; redevelopment of Emerald Forest and Georgia K. Fitch parks; new playgrounds and refreshed amenities at Crompton, Pebble Creek, Sandstone, Tarrow, Thomas and Southwood parks; and at the Lincoln Recreation Center.

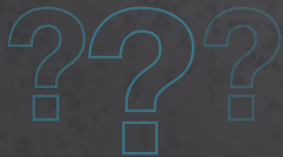


Police Department

Despite several high-profile cases, major crimes in the city were down 17 percent from the previous year. CSPD investigated and handled 17 major incidents throughout the year, including the well-publicized shootings at Walmart and Fidelity Street as well as the bomb scare on the Texas A&M campus. The Police Department also has implemented a new Beat Realignment Plan for 2013. The city is now divided into beats that provide additional efficiencies and effectiveness to our patrol officers. **6,783 CALLS FOR 9-1-1 SERVICE (2012)**

Fire Department

With assistance from \$210,000 in Federal Emergency Management Agency grants, the College Station Fire Department completed an important upgrade to its Fire Station Alerting System. The results are greatly reduced response times and improved firefighter health and safety through a new and innovative gradual alert system that better notifies firefighters of incoming calls. **6,589 FIRE INCIDENTS (2012)**



Financially Strong

7

Budget tightening

Through city council direction and staff determination, a **\$253 million budget** was prepared to meet the community's needs. It was done with a lowered tax rate, greater emphasis on efficiencies, and greater focus on public safety and core services.

Position reorganization & streamlining

Over the last few years, city management has implemented several changes that have restructured the organization's staffing and the services that are provided. This year, staffing reductions and realignments resulted in a savings of slightly over \$500,000. While reducing positions is a very difficult decision, it was done with the city's best interests in mind. As a result, the savings allowed us to provide the additional resources needed to meet the city council's strategic priorities.

Utility Rates

For the second consecutive year, no electric rate increase was needed, thanks to further reductions to Electric Fund transfers to the General Fund. The policy change ensures that the transfer remains reasonable and without burdening the electric utility and electric rates. Since FY2012, the transfer has been reduced by \$3 million. While there was also no increase in the water rate, it was necessary that the waste water rate be increased by five percent to fund needed improvements and increase capacity to keep up with demand.

Operational efficiencies

As economic conditions tightened over the past several years, we constantly challenged our staff to be more innovative and to discover new operational and organizational efficiencies to help save taxpayer dollars. Over the last year, we implemented numerous positive changes, such as:

Converting the manner in which we treat our waste water, saving more than \$200,000 per year

CSU-Electric implemented an automated street light monitoring system that monitors and reports on-street light problems and outages, saving more than 300,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually

Public Works contracted out pothole repair and crack sealing, allowing the department to make the most of its financial and personnel resources

The Sanitation Division used federal grant money to replace a conventional garbage truck with the first hybrid garbage truck in the Brazos Valley. Compared to conventional equipment, the new AutoCar E3 uses approximately 47 percent less fuel than the vehicle it replaced, and with reduced emissions

Lowest tax rate in a decade

Organizational restructuring, operational efficiencies and a 3.6 percent increase in College Station property values allowed adoption of the lowest tax rate in 12 years and the **fifth-lowest rate** among similar-sized Texas cities. City council adopted the effective tax rate of 43.0687 cents per \$100 assessed valuation, which was a decrease of .7308 cents.

In the Spotlight

8

Plaza implosion

In May, much of the country learned about College Station, Texas, through the implosion of one of the city's greatest eyesores, The Plaza Hotel. That once-in-a-lifetime local event was attended by an estimated 10,000 people, but viewed online by thousands more. Images also were broadcast by news agencies from coast to coast. The real benefit will be redevelopment of that key gateway to the city and Texas A&M, which is scheduled to begin in 2013.

Fidelity Street shooting

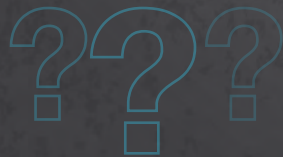
The world's attention was focused on College Station on Aug. 13, when shots rang out on Fidelity Street, not far from the Texas A&M campus. The result was three people dead: the gunman, a local constable and a nearby resident. Police officers and another passerby were injured, and the community displayed an outpouring of support for the affected families and for all law enforcement officials. Through it all, College Station Police Department remained professional, focused and proud representatives of our city.

Howdy, Muschamp!

An innocent swipe at the City of College Station by University of Florida head football coach Will Muschamp resulted in Southeastern Conference fans learning that the home of Texas A&M is also home to a good-humored mayor. Mayor Nancy Berry took to YouTube with a video reply that's been viewed 50,000 times and featured by ESPN, Sports Illustrated and every major sports website and blog in the country.

SEC tourism

Described by Texas A&M officials as a "100-year decision," the jump from the Big-12 to the Southeastern Conference clearly has benefited College Station in a variety of ways. Exposure to a wider national television audience through athletics has helped drive greater numbers of visitors to College Station businesses, hotels and restaurants. Having the 2012 Heisman Trophy winner in the community hasn't hurt College Station's exposure, either.



In the Spotlight

9

USA TODAY / Rand McNally Best of the Road

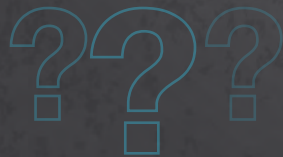
This Public Communications-led effort rallied our citizens to vote for College Station as the friendliest small town in America. Response was enough to make us one of six finalist cities, and the task of hosting and entertaining the contest's judges was monumental. While College Station didn't win, the effort did earn plenty of national exposure from USA TODAY and Rand McNally, and reached audiences that previously had very little awareness of College Station, Texas.

Aggie Field of Honor / ESPN

ESPN contacted the city in the spring, asking if the Aggie Field of Honor could be featured in a documentary about fans who took their team passion all the way to the grave. A collaborative response between Parks & Recreation and Public Communications allowed College Station and the Field of Honor being featured in a 60-second commercial and an **eight-minute documentary**. Not only did the segments receive heavy broadcast play, but the videos received well over one million views on YouTube. The result? More cemetery plots were sold to passionate Aggie fans.

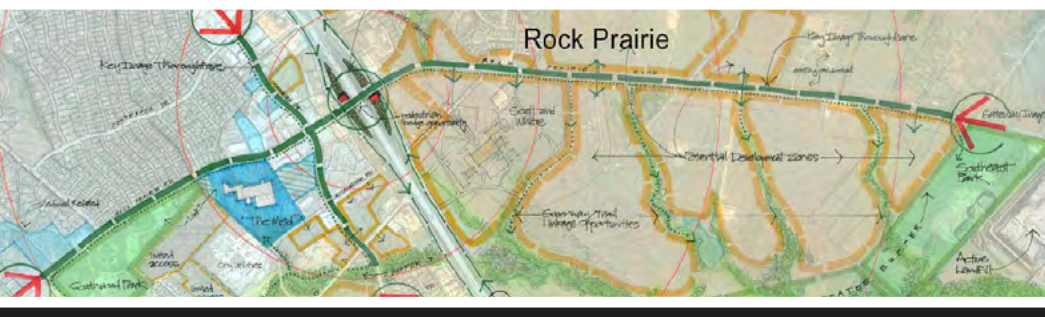
Parks hosted tournaments & events

We're accustomed to seeing our ball fields full of teams throughout the year, but what goes largely unrecognized is the hard work Parks & Recreation does to attract major sporting events to city facilities in the first place. In 2012, Parks & Recreation hosted more than 30 local, state, regional and national tournaments in a variety of sports — from Special Olympics to softball, and from 7-on-7 football to lacrosse. More than 1,300 teams and 25,000 participants were brought to the community due to city-led efforts. Other noteworthy events hosted: Christmas at the Creek, Starlight Music Series, and the inaugural Come & Skate It competition. Wolf Pen Creek events alone drew more than 36,000 spectators.



Building for the Future

10



Medical District

Four years of work and vision to develop a Medical District in College Station made notable progress in 2012 when the city council approved the area's master plan and created two tax increment reinvestment zones (TIRZs) to help finance the district's necessary infrastructure. Next steps: Decisions on how to best manage the Medical District, which could include legislation creating the city's first Municipal Management District.

Hiring in Police & Fire

College Station made a deeper commitment in 2012 to its core service of providing needed police and fire resources for citizens, business owners and visitors. Since FY2009, 43 public safety positions have been added, including 18 firefighters for the new Fire Station 6 and seven new police officers for handling traffic and criminal activity in the Northgate Entertainment District.

BioCorridor

On the heels of College Station and Bryan forming a landmark agreement key to the development of the One Health Plus BioCorridor, the Texas A&M University System in June was named one of three national biodefense centers to help the U.S. quickly develop vaccines in the event of a pandemic. A&M will receive \$176 million in federal funds, another \$109 million from commercial and academic partners, and \$40 million from the state. The cities continue to work on common codes and standards, as well as numerous infrastructure projects to make the BioCorridor immediately viable.

University Drive Development

2012 will be remembered as a year College Station's skyline changed drastically, especially along University Drive. The Stack and Rise projects continue skyward, while site work will soon begin at the former site of the Plaza Hotel. Plans also continue on the Texas A&M-led Campus Pointe development, which is near the old Plaza site. While the growth is exciting, it will require considerable effort to provide the necessary infrastructure.

Building for the Future

11

Public Utilities

Our public utilities are among the best in the state in terms of service and reliability. To keep up with our growing demand, we have completed several projects such as the new state-of-the-art Utility Dispatch Operations Center and the electric transmission system interconnection with Entergy Texas. We also increased reserve water pumping capacity and backup systems at the Dowling Road and Sandy Point Pump Stations, and completed a major water line cleaning process to provide clearer, finer-quality water to our customers.

Maintaining Neighborhood Integrity

As the city continues to grow, we must ensure that our existing neighborhoods are maintained. To that end, we have completed the Southside Neighborhood Plan, initiated the Wellborn Area Plan, adopted new non-residential zoning districts, and implemented the “SeeClickFix” application for code enforcement. Our SeeClickFix service is the 14th most successful in the nation.

Fire Station No. 6

The most talked about fire station in the community formally opened its doors in November. Fire Station 6, at the corner of University Drive and Tarrow Street, allows better response times throughout the University Drive corridor while consolidating many of CSFD’s operations. Station 6 now is home to the department’s Hazardous Materials Response Team, Water and Dive Rescue Team, and features meeting space for community groups. The facility is projected to serve the needs of College Station for the next 50 years.





CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
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